Views and Reviews in the World of Art

"The Thresher," by Horatio Walker. At John Levy Galleries.

(*Continued from preceding page.*)

Herter, Francis C. Jones and Douglas Volk.

Boston—Edmund C. Tarbell and Joseph De Camp.

Philadelphia—Joseph T. Pearson, Jr.; Hugh H. Breckenridge and Daniel Garber.

Chicago—Ralph Clarkson and Oliver Dennett Grover.

San Francisco—Herman Herkomer.

Jury of Award—Herbert Adams, Gari Melchers, William T. Smedley, J. Alden Weir and Irving R. Wiles.

Mrs. Whitney Shows Modern Chinese Art

The Chinese Paintings by comparatively modern artists that have been brought to America by Mrs. Francis Aysoough and are being shown in Mrs. Henry Payne Whitney's galleries, are calculated to give pleasure to the fraternities of Washington Square South and Greenwich Village. They have a dashing ease of execution that will be the despair of our young artists who love ease of execution above all things. It would be idle to pretend that these Chinese artists—who lived and flourished in the period that ended with the Boxer troubles—have all the subtlety and seriousness of the grander epochs, but they still looked at nature from the same angle that the classic painters used, and had the old intimacy and comprehension with birds and animals.

Mrs. Ayscough, who lives in Shanghai, says that the works of Jen Po-Nien, Hsu Ku and Wang Shu, artists represented in this exhibition, were very much appreciated by the Chinese amateurs, who relished very much the freshness and piquancy of this modern work. She says of it:

"To appreciate Chinese painting at its true worth the Occidental must adopt a point of view differing in many ways from that in which he has been educated. He must realize, firstly, that the outlook of the artist is that of a bird on the wing, and that the perspective in the apparently fantastic landscapes he is studying seems so strange because in the majority of cases the painter has regarded his subject from above, he has walked among the mountains, or has remained seated by the window of his rustic dwelling, gazing down upon the scene before him until it has impressed itself upon his very soul; then and then only has he in the privacy of his chamber transferred it to his silk. 'I have it all in my heart,' was the reply of the great Wu Tao-tzu to his Emperor who had despatched him to depict the beautiful scenery on the Chia-ling river Ssuch'uan, and who was amazed when the painter returned empty handed.

"Secondly, the distinctive attitude which the Oriental assumes toward Nature must be taken into consideration. Here, indeed, lies the very crux of the matter; whereas to the individualistic West Man is the Centre and Lord of the Universe, he is on the contrary, to the more integral East, but one of the component parts of Creation. The philosophy which since the days of the I Ching (written by Duke Wen of Chou, before 1122 B. C.) has directed the evolution of the Chinese mind, considers 'every being in the world, every manifestation of Nature, every genii, every god, as an active part of the great whole, of that Reality which is behind and beyond the flux of phenomena.' This philosophy it is which has given to the Oriental his marvellous comprehension of Nature in all her moods and works, be these of the most trivial. With a flower, a bird, a tree, he feels a sense of kinship which must of

"Liberty," by Couture. In Hearn sale, American Art Association.

necessity be denied to his more sophisticated brother of the West, and the Chinese artist strives to interpret the very soul of Nature, as our portrait painter strives to unveil the most intimate characteristics of those whose features he is delineating.

"Further, it must never be forgotten that Chinese pictorial art is in no sense photographic or objective; in fact, it is entirely suggestive and subjective, thus corresponding in many respects more to our music than to our painting. Thus the Shou Ch'nan or long horizontal scrolls were intended to be taken up and slowly unrolled, to be enjoyed bit by bit, to present one theme following upon another, completing and resolving that which had just passed.

"The question of modern Chinese art is one of interest. When one considers the masterpieces of those ages when the civilization of China was without doubt the greatest in the world, when she had no rivals, one is inclined to think that nothing produced since those days is worthy of consideration. A study, however, of fine modern work brings a modification of such a view.

"Art reflects the spirit of the age; the magnificent landscapes painted during the T'ang and Sung periods were the poetic visions of men who lived in the halcyon days ere the art of leisure was lost, when poets, painters and musicians were 'numerous as sand'; through the succeeding dynasties of the Yuan and Ming and during the early days of Ch'ing the same calm spirit engendered by a highly developed civilization surpassing all those with which it came in contact prevailed. With the advent, however, of the virile, vigorous, European who, early in the 19th century, insisted that the barriers, hitherto inviolate, should be lowered, a new spirit was infused into Chinese thought. The superiority of the civilization began to be questioned, no longer was the 'Son of T'ang' convinced that his point of view was indubitably superior to that of all creation. Doubts arose. Parties which demanded progress on Western lines contended with those which claimed that the only hope of salvation lay in adherence to the ancient forms hallowed by Time.

"In the mad revolt against the modern spirit, known as the Boxer Rebellion, one last attempt was made by those who represented the forces of reaction to push the Western Barbarian into the sea, one last attempt to preserve the well worn structure still in use.

"The attempt failed. To-day China is in mad career on the path of material and industrial progress; there is no time or thought for Art. When the Renaissance, in which all lovers of China firmly believe, dawns, the forms of expression assumed will undoubtedly be different from those we have known; what they will be none can foretell. The pictures on view, painted by men who died just before the fateful year 1900, are especially interesting in that, although untouched by any influence of Western technique, they reveal the restless spirit which prevailed at the end of the century, and to all who look forward to the Renaissance their freshness and virility must bring hope of things that are to be.

"The art of China is not dead when men can produce paintings like the squirrels of Hsu Ku, the Lao Tzu of Jen Po-nien or the Geese and Rushes of Pien Shou-nien."

Notes and Activities in the World of Art

Here are two anecdotes of J. Alden Weir:

The first was told by John Flanagan, the American medailleur. It seems that when Mr. Weir went to Europe first as a young man he carried some excellent letters of introduction, among others one to Ernest Renan, the celebrated author of the "Life of Jesus." He did not present it, however, and one day at some affair at the Sorbonne M. Renan came up to him and said:

"I understand that you have a letter of introduction to me. Why have you not been to see me?"

"It was because," faltered Mr. Weir in some confusion, "I did not speak French well and feared to bore you."

"But, good heavens," returned M. Renan, "do I not speak English well enough then?"

The second story is by Ernest Lawson, who says that in the early days Mr. Weir once went to the little hotel at Barbizon that was frequented by the painters of the school and was asked by the proprietor to contribute a picture to be added to the famous collection that already adorned the walls. Mr. Weir was so flattered by the request that he rushed right out there and then into the landscape, although it was raining and proceeded to paint a picture, which when finished was duly added to the hotel collection.

Many years afterward upon returning to the hotel Mr. Weir had the curiosity to look up his picture. Somewhat to his surprise he found that the picture which had been painted upon a wet canvas had almost entirely peeled off. Only a few little specks of paint were attached to the canvas, but the signature which had been achieved with a lead pencil, was as clear and legible as ever.

Thirteen landscapes by George Inness, Jr., are now on view in the Edison Shop Gallery and bear many resemblances to the work of his noted father, which is natnatural enough and possibly to have been expected.

The love for sunsets has descended from father to son, and most of these canvases sing hymns to evening and the twilight hour. The dramatic movement of the clouds in changing weather attracts the younger Mr. Inness as it did the elder and there is a large painting of "Spring" in the interior of a wood with deep soft grass and a half-seen footbridge over a small stream. These pictures have been sympathetically hung by Miss Godwin.

Visitors to the Architectural League Exhibition are attracted into the "Academy" Room, at the left of the entrance hall, by an unusual moonlight effect produced by the process of the Cornwell lumino. The novelty of the work astonishes as much as the naturalness of the picture, and expressions of "wonderful!" "most attractive thing in the rooms," &c., are constantly heard.

The Lumino is the most modern method of art work. It is produced by using light flowing through colored paper, the paper being used instead of paint to model color and form and the light showing produces all the effects of painting, including that most evanescent of desirable results—luminous shadows.

These pictures are called Cornwell Luminos, and were invented and fully patented by William C. Cornwell. Mr. Cornwell is a banker and financial writer and an artist. He is the author of the *Bache Review*, a widely circulated and most influential financial weekly, which is quoted all over the world. He is also a painter, and for years has devoted a part of his time to painting in water color and oils. The discovery of this new process resulted from a strange accident.